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ONE HUNDRED YEARS

—OF—

METHODISM

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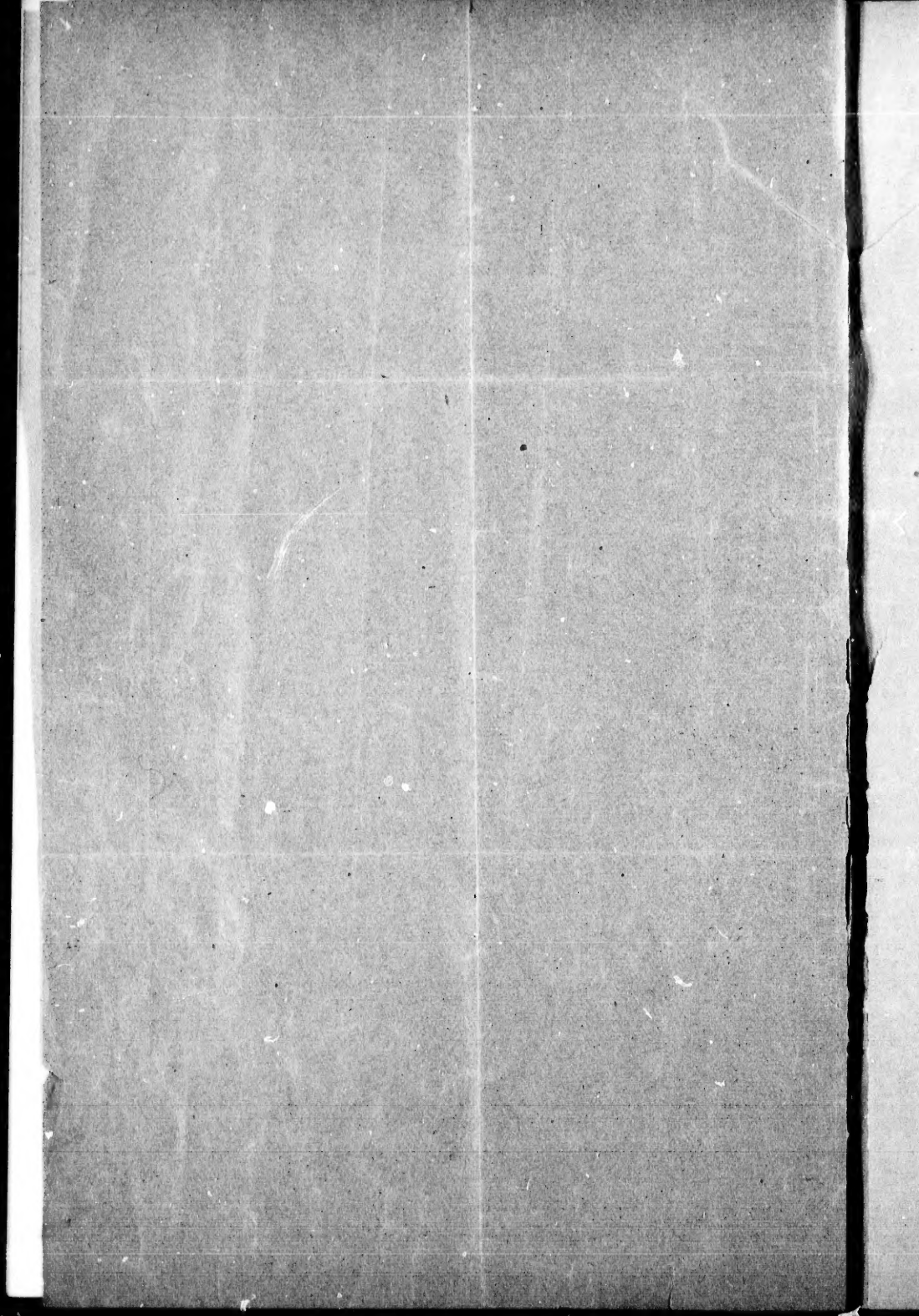
LUNDY'S LANE.

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BY REV. JOHN C. STEVENSON,

PASTOR OF LUNDY'S LANE METHODIST CHURCH,  
NIAGARA FALLS SOUTH.

1899



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LUNDY'S LANE METHODIST CHURCH.

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NIAGARA FALLS SOUTH, NOV. 6TH, 1898.

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# One Hundred Years of Methodism in Lundy's Lane.

**L**ECKEY the historian speaks of John Wesley as "the greatest figure in religious history since the reformation." Dr. Chalmers pronounced Methodism to be "Christianity in earnest." This earnest Christianity arose as the result of John Wesley's new birth in 1738, when at the mature age of 35 years. By birth and education Wesley was a high churchman, and like his father became a clergyman of the Established church in England. In an age of extreme formalism and spiritual deadness his life and work were marked by unusual strictness and fidelity. Yet he was far from satisfied with his own spiritual state. He came out from England to the American colonies, and spent some years as a missionary in Georgia. He returned to England with a sense of failure and groping for light. The light and peace of God came to him in a little meeting conducted by a layman in a private house in Aldersgate street, London, his feelings being expressed in language now familiar to all Methodists: "I felt my heart strangely warmed." From that date Wesley was a new man. This strange warmth—the life of the Holy Spirit—was soon felt by others. He had a new message to the dead churches which they would not receive. He was thrust out from the church of his fathers, took to the streets and highways, and fields; the common people heard him gladly, with wonderful rapidity the new life spread through the three kingdoms, and Methodism had begun its remarkable career.

The first Methodist church in the world was built in Bristol, England, in 1739. The new evangel was carried to distant places chiefly by emigrants and soldiers. Thus Methodism was founded by the Irish emigrants, Philip Embury and Barbara Heck, in New York in 1766, and in Newfoundland one year earlier by another Irishman, Lawrence Coughlan, who had been received on trial as a preacher by John Wesley.

It is worth while looking at the beginnings of Methodism in Canada, where it is now the largest Protestant church and leads the country in every moral reform.

These beginnings it is not possible in every case to trace, for the reason that private members of Methodist societies in those days moving to new homes carried their Methodism with them; began to exhort their neighbors, and to form classes, and thus in many places the foundations of flourishing churches were laid "without observation" by laborers unknown and unrecorded. In this manner United Empire Loyalists had planted Methodism on the shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario and along the banks of the St. Lawrence before the advent of the regular itinerant preachers in these localities. The stirring conflicts, the quick movements and the strict discipline of Methodism while Wesley yet lived, seemed to have had a peculiar attraction for men in military life, and soldiers became in not a few places its most ardent founders and propagators. Capt. Webb was one of the first to come to the help of the infant society in New York city. Commissary Tuffey began to preach in Quebec as early as 1780, and tracing the first beginnings of Methodism on the Niagara frontier we find that the first preacher was also a soldier.

MAJOR, GEORGE NEAL,

who preached and formed the first class-meeting in 1788. How was this first Methodist preacher welcomed in this neighborhood at that early day? Preaching as he did, against prevailing vices and loved sins of the time and place, he excited the opposition of "the baser sort," and the rabble pelted him with stones until the blood flowed down his face. But Neal was a soldier and stood his ground. What success attended his heroic ministry? Our means of information are but scanty, but we are able to name at least one of the converts under the first Methodist evangelist—a noted man in his day and a name revered until this day—Christian Warner, who lived near where St. David's

now stands. Major Neal, retiring from the army, became a regular travelling preacher. He retained his military bearing even in old age and died in Canada in 1839, the centenary year of Methodism, at the patriarchal age of ninety-one years.

The Methodism of Upper Canada at this time and for a number of years after was connected with the Methodist Episcopal church of the United States as established by Wesley at the close of the Revolutionary war. By that church the first appointments of travelling preachers in Canada were made. In the year 1791 we come to the name of

WILLIAM LOSEE,

the first itinerant preacher appointed to Upper Canada. He had no circuit, for no circuit was yet formed. His commission was to "range at large," preach where he could find hearers and form his converts into classes. At the end of the year the first circuit was formed—Kingston or Cataraqui. This first circuit included this Niagara country. Two classes are named—one in the township of Augusta and the other in Niagara, which means near the Niagara river. This Niagara class we may be certain was the class formed three years earlier by Major Neal and meeting at the home of Christian Warner and attended, we may assume, by persons within a radius of some miles, including the immediate neighborhood of Lundy's Lane.

Methodism, then, in this locality dates from 1788, and this Niagara country became a seedbed of Methodism for the greater part of Upper Canada. William Losee, the first itinerant, at the time of his arrival in Canada was a young man of twenty-eight years, tall and active, but with one arm shrivelled and therefore called the "one armed" Losee. Using the saddle, as all preachers did in that day, he was a fearless horseman, his ordinary pace being a gallop. He was a fearless preacher also—with impassioned earnestness like another John the Baptist his voice was heard in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

In the year 1792 there were two circuits, Kingston and Oswegotchie, the latter taking the name of a stream emptying into the St. Lawrence opposite where Prescott now stands.

In 1795 there were three circuits in Canada, the third being Niagara. That year

#### NIAGARA CIRCUIT

appears for the first time in the minutes of conference with the name Darius Dunham for its first minister. One of the most interesting Methodist relics in Canada and perhaps the oldest, is the Niagara circuit account book now in possession of Bro. Z. B. Lewis, of this church, and containing the record of circuit finance, and other business from the time of the formation of the circuit in 1795 until the close of the year 1823. The title page reads, "Book of accounts of the contributions and disbursements of the Methodist E. church on Niagara circuit, established 1795. Christian Warner, general steward, approved of and appointed at a quarterly meeting held at Lyons Creek, Feby. 27-28, 1796.

DARS DUNHAM."

From this date we are on sure footing and can trace the history of Methodism in the neighborhood from official documents and regular church histories. The Niagara circuit extended north and east beyond Toronto, till met by the Kingston circuit, and west as far as London, and south to the shores of Lake Erie, following the pioneers, and as converts multiplied and churches grew, dividing and sub-dividing until now hundreds of circuits and churches are included within the boundary of the original Niagara circuit. We can understand now what the word travelling preacher meant in those days—not one who moved once in three years, but one whose work involved constant travel, long journeys generally in the saddle, but frequently by boat or on foot. Darius Dunham, the first minister of this circuit, had good talents as a preacher but was so plain and blunt that his name comes down to us as "scolding Dunham." But his "scolding" as it was called was not without the spice of mother wit. Preaching at the Head of the Lake appointment and meeting the class he observed on one occasion that several strangers had remained and requested that any who wished to join the society would signify it by standing up. Two young women were sitting together, one of whom seemed desirous of joining but asked her companion to join also. She in a heartless manner replied loud enough to be heard, "I don't care if I do," when Dunham at once broke in, "You had better wait till you do care." A sample this of the plain dealing of those early days.

The second minister was James Coleman, appointed in 1798, a man of slender

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der abilities and limited education, but a man of God whose prayers were attended with a peculiar unction and whose preaching was made effective by his fervent love. In 1800 Joseph Sawyer came, a man of mark in Methodist history. Unlike some of the early preachers he was a man of polished manners and superior education—picture a man of twenty-nine years old, erect and dignified, neat and tasteful in dress, wearing a broad leaved hat and cutaway coat, with hair falling on his shoulders, and you see the third minister of the Niagara circuit. Under the labors of Sawyer a great revival took place in this vicinity. Among the converts was a young school teacher, Nathan Bangs, and this name now claims our attention, for the

#### REV. NATHAN BANGS, D. D.,

whose life has been written by the greatest historian of Methodism, Abel Stephens, was known for many years as one of the greatest men of American Methodism. He was the first editor of the Christian Advocate, the author of the first history of Methodism, editor of the Methodist Review, founder of the Missionary Society and a debater in general conference of unsurpassed ability. Leaving New York state in 1799, when twenty years old, coming by way of Buffalo, where he found only a few log huts, crossing the river and reaching the Falls when there was not a house on either side, he reached the neighborhood of Stamford and obtained a situation as school teacher and boarded in the same house with Rev. James Coleman. Under the prayers of the devout Coleman young Bangs was convinced of sin, and during the revival under Joseph Sawyer's ministry he obtained the peace and love of God. One of his first acts was to open the school with prayer. To this the trustees objected, and rather than discontinue the prayers he gave up his situation. Soon after we find him boarding in the home of Christian Warner, by whose counsels and prayers he was led into the experience of "perfect love, which casteth out fear." He had such confidence in the Christian purity and influence of Mr. Warner that he "loved his very presence, and in prayer meetings wished to kneel close by his side." Encouraged to preach, he made the attempt, at first with shaking limbs and stiffened lips, but the power of God

came down, his lips were opened and sobbs and praises filled the house. The next year Nathan Bangs was received as an itinerant preacher and appointed to the Niagara circuit. At the end of the year he was able to report an increase of 300 members. In 1850, two aged men visited Canada together, both servants of God, their work well done—Nathan Bangs, now seventy years old, and his ancient friend and pastor, Joseph Sawyer, now four score years. They recalled and revisited the old scenes, and at the conference in Toronto related many of the struggles and triumphs of the pioneer days. N. Bangs lingered on until 1862, when he passed home, Joseph Sawyer having preceded him by ten years.

There are a few more names before the war, worthy of mention. The appointments are: 1804, Thomas Whitehead, who to reach Niagara from Albany had a journey of six weeks, living on boiled wheat by the way. Many of his descendants now reside in Ontario. In 1808, Henry Ryan, described as "a brave Irishman who labored as if the judgment thunders were to follow each sermon." He was accustomed to meet his colleagues, Isaac B. Smith and Robt. Perry, at the intersections of the roads with the salutation, "Drive on brother, drive on, drive the devil out of the country." Camp meetings were commenced in his time, and at these Ryan was at his best. He was as strong as he was brave, and has been known more than once to quell camp meeting disturbances by jerking the disturber, an ordinary sized man, off his seat and throwing him with little ceremony over the enclosure.

1810—Joseph Gatchell: His gifts in preaching were supplemented by the exhortations of his wife, a sister of Nathan Bangs, who, to use the phrase current at the time, exhorted "like a streak of red hot lightning."

1812—Andrew Prindle: A Canadian by birth, who said of himself that he "received his education in Canada when there were no schools and no books." He was a faithful man, but remembered chiefly by the early settlers for his huge size, becoming in early middle life so corpulent as to be compelled to sit while preaching.

During the war many of the ministers stationed in Canada returned to the United States, and their names no longer appear in connection with our work on this side. Among those who re-

mained and served the Niagara circuit during the war were: Ninian Holmes, a man of superior gifts, who spent the remainder of his life in Canada, and David Youmans and Silas Hopkins, who were both Canadians by birth. A meeting of the conference was appointed to be held in 1812 at Warner's chapel, but met instead at the residence of Mr. Swayzie, of Beaverdams. On account of the disturbed state of the country only seven preachers were present.

#### THE OLD RED MEETING HOUSE

was built a few years after the war, certainly not later than 1817. Previous to the building of the church several persons in the neighborhood opened their homes for Methodist services and classes were formed at Jonah Howey's in 1795, or it may be earlier, at Mr. House's, in 1806, and Mr. Corwin's in 1816. Howey lived a little distance south of Lundy's Lane, and House and Corwin a little to the north. At length these scattered societies united their efforts and resolved to build. A plot of ground, two acres in extent, was donated by Mr. Charles Green, a U. E. Loyalist, and here at the head of the Lane, where the public school now stands, the church was built. This was one of the first Methodist churches erected in Upper Canada. A few others can claim an earlier date. The Blue church on Hay Bay is older. The church at Lyons Creek was built before 1816. In the Niagara circuit book "the Niagara church" is mentioned in 1811, and there is also the record of a quarterly meeting held at "the meeting house," October 13, 1805. These records probably refer to Warner's church, which was the first church erected in this part of Upper Canada. It was built in the face of strong opposition. The Rev. R. I. Warner, M. A., of Alma college, in a recent letter tells of hearing in his youth of an attempt made to burn the church while in the course of erection, and of how the navvies employed in the construction of the railway in the thirties, left the old building almost a wreck. A little frame church now stands on the same site a short distance from the track of the Grand Trunk railway.

The old red meeting house is remembered by the older people as a strong frame building 36x56, painted on the outside a dark red; a high box pulpit, reached by a flight of stairs, stood on one side, an aisle down the centre, on one side seats for the men, on the other side

seats for the women—a custom which survived in some rural districts until a few years ago. This church stood for more than 40 years, a centre to which Methodists gathered from all parts of the country to quarterly meetings and conferences. The first quarterly meeting was held here on Dec. 26th, 1818.

In the month of July, 1820, the red meeting house was the scene of a meeting of great interest. The Genesee conference met there that year. Preachers assembled from all parts of Canada, and from distant parts of the United States. Reaching conference in those days involved much toil and danger. One preacher while on his way was drowned in the Susquehanna river. More than one hundred travelling preachers assembled under the presidency of the American bishop, Enoch George. On Sunday so many came to the public services that an adjournment was made to an adjoining grove. Here twenty young men knelt together and were solemnly ordained to the work of the ministry—among these were men who six years before had fought on opposite sides, near to this spot in the fierce battle of Lundy's Lane. Now they knelt side by side and received authority to preach the gospel of peace. Several local preachers were ordained at this conference—names well known in Canada—Caleb Burdick, Abner Matthews and Smith Griffin, of Smithville.

When the last day of the conference came the preachers brought their horses saddled, ready to start. The appointments were to be read by the bishop and each man without demur or delay would start for his new field. Invitations and protests were alike unknown in those days. The circuit welcomed the preacher appointed and the preacher went where he was sent. No man could tell within a hundred miles of where he might be sent until his circuit and name were read out by the bishop—true soldiers these waiting their marching orders. The moment arrives—the stations are read—the benediction pronounced—handshaking and tears are indulged in by those who have met and may meet no more on earth. One who was present, the Rev. Fitch Reed, tells how they passed out of the church, mounted and formed in regular order two abreast—proceeded for some distance in this order, then separated, going north and south, east and west to declare everywhere the grace of Christ their King

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and Saviour. Thus did this band of one hundred knights errant of the cross, on that memorable day leave the old red meeting house

"O that each in the day of his coming may say,  
"I have fought my way through,  
I have finished the work thou didst give me to do";

O that each from the Lord may receive the glad word,

"Well and faithfully done"  
Enter into my joy and sit down on my throne."

To follow the names of those who occupied the pulpit of the old red meeting house would be to recall almost all

#### THE LEADING MINISTERS

of our church in the early days. I can but select a few. George Ferguson was another soldier preacher. He was with General Murray at the attack of the American fort, Niagara, was wounded at the battle of Chippawa and was healed of his wounds at the Methodist home of Christian Warner. His commanding officer had such confidence in his christian integrity and fidelity as a soldier that on one occasion when a battle was expected at any hour he was given leave of absence that he might attend a quarterly meeting at Warner's chapel. He retired from the army, entered the ministry and the year 1817 finds him appointed to the Niagara circuit and taking in his turn the services in Lundy's Lane. In 1822 Isaac Puffer took up the first missionary collection amounting to £36-8-7. This was two years before the Missionary society of our church in Canada was organized and but two years after the Missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal church of the United States was founded by Nathan Bangs. We may regard this amount as the first missionary money ever collected by our Church in Canada and it is interesting to note that the collection was made on the Niagara circuit when Dr. Bangs, the founder of the society, was converted and commenced his ministry. About this time

#### THE RYERSONS

appear in connection with the circuit. Their father was Colonel Ryerson, of Long Point, a staunch Loyalist and a loyal churchman who could barely tolerate dissent—yet five of his sons became Methodists, worse still, all five became Methodist ministers, Egerton, who became the most distinguished, having given his name for membership at the age of eighteen years, was met by his father's ultimatum, "Egerton, I understand you have joined the Methodists,

you must either leave them or leave my house." He left the house the next day. Of the five Methodist sons of this sturdy anti-Methodist colonel three served our church at the head of the Lane—William Ryerson in 1822. For fifty years he held his place as one of the most powerful preachers of the province, becoming president of the conference, and after his superannuation a member of the Canadian parliament. John Ryerson was stationed here in 1826 and he also maintained for almost three score years an eminent place in the ministry of our church. Edwy M. Ryerson, who was twenty six years in our ministry, was stationed here as junior minister in 1833 and again as superintendent minister in 1849 and 1850. Time will but permit the naming of some of the honored and beloved ministers who held appointments here between the years 1816 and 1844—such as Ezra Adams, Elijah Warren, David Youmans, Jas. Richardson, Edmund Stoney, Ephraim Evans, David Wright, Alexander McNabb, Richard Jones Samuel Rose, Thomas Bevitt, Matthew Whiting, Hamilton Biggar, G. R. Sanderson, Lewis Warner, Jonathan Scott. These are names to linger over—names of men who made the history of Methodism in Canada.

At the last date mentioned—1844—a new brick church was erected on the site of the present building. This was during the ministry of Revs. Jonathan Scott and Joseph Messmore.

But those who had long worshipped at the head of the Lane were loth to leave the old place of meeting and from the year 1844 until 1857 services were held in both churches although but little more than a mile apart. Fond recollections of the old church still survive. The names of the old preachers are lovingly repeated. What grand quarterly meetings were held there! From far and near Methodists gathered for the "feast of good things" lasting from Friday evening until Monday morning—the grace of hospitality abounded and the work of billeting was a joy. What stirring revival services! Many of the terms and phrases then used would seem strange to this generation. They held "protracted meetings" in those days. They had a "penitent form"—"Penitents" and "Converts" were classes quite distinct. The "Mourners" were known by their tears and cries and when they "got through" the new rapture made their face to shine.

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first W. L. Lane on the Niagara Frontier Sep 17 86.

The "amen corner" was in every part of the church and the shout "hallelujah" or "glory to God" made no one start and shocked no person's sensibilities. Best of all of many who lived the Christian life it could be said, "this and that man was born" there. What singing there was in those old days! No organ led and to "sing by note" was a rare accomplishment. But the gospel invitation was heartily given in the chorus, "O say will you go to the Eden above" and the invitation seemed to change to a command when with a full voice was sung:

"Turn to the Lord and seek salvation."

What a volume of music in old West's when joined to the words:

"There is a land of pure delight."

And how the rafters of the old meeting house echoed the sound of many voices singing:

"And above the rest this note shall swell  
My Jesus hath done all things well."

One quarterly meeting is remembered for incidents of quite another character. It was between fifty and sixty years ago Lewis Warner was preaching when the door was suddenly opened and the single word "fire" startled the congregation. Rushing out, the neighboring parsonage was seen to be in a blaze. Fighting the fire with success, the congregation returned and settled down to the service, only to be startled once more by a cry and a fall—one of the old members had been fatally seized with paralysis.

In 1857, during the Rev. Mr. Dickson's term, services ceased to be held in the red meeting house. The building was removed from the old site, and is still owned by a Methodist, although used for purposes not strictly sacred.

The circuit register about this date shows that the number of members at Lundy's Lane appointment was eighty-two—of these eleven survive and are now members of our church. The names are: Mr. and Mrs. Marsena Morse, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Garner, Mr. and Mrs. Z. B. Lewis, Mr. and Mrs. Adam Garner, Mrs. Susan Howey, Mr. Walter Waite and Mrs. Peter McGarry.

Following the history of the brick church built in 1844 down to the time when in 1888 it was superseded by the present building, we come to the names of the following ministers who "rest from their labors":

Reuben E. Tupper,  
Edwy M. Ryerson,

Thomas Cosford,  
Claudius Byrne,  
Alexander T. Green,  
G. N. A. F. T. Dickson,  
John G. Laird.

A number of others who still live have sent messages of greeting and remembrance for this service. The first is from the

REV. E. B. HARPER, D. D.,

of Barrie, who fifty-two years ago ministered to this congregation. Illness prevents him using his pen, but through a friend he says, with the promise of a further communication, "In the meantime I send my greetings to my old charge with best wishes for success."

REV. JOHN HUNT,

of Toronto, whose appointments date for the three years following June, 1848, writes: "Fifty years ago last June I was sent to Niagara, of which I had special charge. The circuit was known as Drummondville and Niagara, and regarded as one of the most desirable and pleasant circuits in our work. E. B. Harper moved from Niagara to Lundy's Lane parsonage. Our work was two Sundays in Niagara and an alternate afternoon at Queenston and Virgil. Then two Sundays at Lundy's Lane and Drummondville in the evening and alternately at Stamford and St. David's, afternoon. Rev. Edwy Ryerson was my colleague during the third year, a most beautiful and impressive preacher. Niagara was then the county town, a place of considerable business, with between three and four thousand inhabitants. We had a very fine congregation, and during the first year a most gracious revival of religion. At Lundy's Lane we also held special meetings two or three times during the term of years I was there with a good degree of success. At Lundy's Lane and the country around the Falls we had a number of excellent old Canadian families, always kindly and most hospitable, faithful and loyal to the church, but if my recollection is correct some were tinged with an anxiety to get rich, which materially retarded their growth in spirituality. On the whole, however, they were a generous and most kind-hearted people, whose homes it was always a pleasure to visit. I recall the names of Benjamin and John Corwin, Jacob Garner, George Wright, Hiram Howey, John and George Bender, Alanson Ross and others. I do not know any one of those

I have named but has passed over to join the great majority. We, too, are following hard after and shall soon be there. I often am a wonder to myself; am within less than a month of eighty years, yet really doing as much work as ever I did. Have preached every Sabbath between six and seven years in the general hospital, and visit hundreds every week. I love the work; I love the Master, and hope to do His work while He lends me breath."

REV. JOHN WAKEFIELD D. D.,

of Dundas, greets his old congregation in these words: "My first personal knowledge of Methodism in Lundy's Lane was in the summer of 1857, when I was stationed in the town of Niagara, and the Rev. G. N. A. F. T. Dickson was stationed at Drummondville. When Mr. Dickson left in 1860, I was appointed as his successor. The circuit was then composed of Drummondville, Stamford, Chippawa, Clifton and Beechwoods. I was assisted by a staff of local preachers, such as William Appleford, James Shrimpton, and part of the time the Revd's Peter Ker and Wm. Sutton were laid aside from the regular work and lived there. I found the circuit in a low state, and for a year and a half there was little religious life. In the fall of 1862 I began special services at the head of the circuit, in sheer desperation, and preached every night, except Saturday, for more than twelve weeks. For five of these weeks there was a small attendance and little encouragement, but a break came, and the house was often so full that I could not get penitents to the altar, as every available spot was filled with the ordinary congregation. Sinners, however, were converted, and there were some seasons of great power, and many cried aloud for mercy, or shouted victory through the blood of the Lamb. Over a hundred adults were converted, seventy-six of them heads of families. The next year we enlarged the church, and put what good James Badger called a 'hell' on the back end of it, with a basement storey for class and school rooms. That year too we held a camp meeting in the woods of John Ker, Esq., just southwest of the village (the only one so far as I know ever held in that immediate part of the country.) This meeting was largely attended, and though not a very large number of souls were converted, hundreds of Christians from many miles around entered into the rest of perfect

love, and the influence of the meeting for good was felt for a long time in most of the circuits in all that part of the country. We had great trouble with the rough element accustomed to gather about the Falls, who, in spite of protest built their booths on the road near the grounds, where they had shows of wild cats, sold liquor and carried on other iniquities. In a few days, however, we had several of them arrested, tried, and heavily fined by John Ker, Esq., who held his court in his tent on the grounds, so that all the rest of them cleared out. Thus law and right triumphed over these bad men as it had not done for a long time.

"When I went to the circuit Bro. Jacob Garner was recording steward, but shortly afterward Bro. Z. B. Lewis was appointed to that office, and held it for many years, often, as I know personally, making up deficiencies in ministers' salaries at the end of the year. I hardly dare begin to mention names, though many of them and their works are fresh upon my mind. There were two large classes in the village meeting on Sunday, one met by Bro. John Ker, and the other by Bro. James Badger, both faithful, good men, who have since passed into the skies, and their works do follow them. There was also a pretty large class met by the minister on a week evening, in the house of Bro. Marsena Morse.

"At the end of three years I had learned to love the people, and left the circuit with great regret. After more than forty-six years in the ministry I send greetings to my old charge on Lundy's Lane. Tell them to hold fast to the old doctrines of early Methodism, such as the divinity of Jesus Christ, the universality of the Atonement, justification by faith, holiness of heart, without which no man shall see the Lord, and the clear and unmistakable witness of God's Spirit to the soul of the believer, telling him of His sonship, and adoption into the family of God. If faithful we shall meet again under better conditions than this life can afford."

REV. W. S. BLACKSTOCK D. D.,

of Toronto, who was the minister during the years 1864-65-66, says: "Will you be kind enough to convey to my old and dear friends at Niagara Falls the assurance of my unabated interest in them, and everything that pertains to their well-being and the prosperity of the cause of God among them. I am

glad that the close of the first hundred years of their history as a Methodist society is not to pass by unnoticed and that facts and incidents of the past are not to be forgotten.

"It was no small honor that was conferred upon your locality when it was selected by divine Providence to be one of the original seed-plots of Methodism. It is worthy of being remembered that before William Losee performed that remarkable missionary journey from Lake Champlain to Hay Bay, which resulted in the regular organization of Methodism in Upper Canada, Major George Neale was at work on the Niagara Frontier, and the Falls was probably about the centre of the field of his labors. If not the first Methodist class, certainly the second ever formed in Upper Canada was that of which Christian Warner was the leader in Stamford within a couple of miles of St. David's. The third place of worship erected by the Methodists in this province was the old Warner meeting house in the same place. It would be interesting to know the names of the people who composed that class, and the incidents connected with their first attempt at church-building.

"One thing that we do know about it is, that about the time of the opening of that primitive place of worship a great revival of religion took place on the old Niagara circuit, of which Niagara Falls formed a part; and that in that revival Nathan Bangs, who afterwards became one of the greatest of the great men of American Methodism, was converted. It is worthy of being remembered too that the first Methodist conference held in Canada was held within the bounds of this circuit, and that at that conference—as I learned from his own lips—Rev. George Peck, another of the great men of Methodism, the author of the most learned and probably the best book on the doctrine of Christian perfection that has been written, was set apart to the office and work of the ministry by the laying on of hands. How many thousands of souls have been converted and gathered into the church within the limits of that field; and what a number of ministers of the gospel have been raised up there, and sent forth to preach the everlasting gospel in every part of the country! But what is most important to remember is that we have the same gospel today that our fathers had, and when accompanied by the holy spirit it has lost

none of its ancient power. The world needs it as much as it ever did, and we have a right to expect the same signs to follow its faithful proclamation. The review of the past ought to inspire us with confidence and hope for the future. And my earnest prayer is that the history of the next hundred years may so far as the congregation at Niagara Falls is concerned—nay so far as our church throughout the Dominion of Canada and all its missionary fields is concerned—that the glory of the past may be eclipsed by the greater glory of the future and that we may be permitted to see at least the dawning of the brighter day that is before us."

REV. JOHN MILLS,

of Guelph, thus greets you:

"It affords me unmingled pleasure to respond to your kind request to address a few words of greeting to my old and dear friends, the members and adherents of the Methodist church in Lundy's Lane. At the conference of the Wesleyan Methodist church, held in the month of June, in the year 1870, twenty-eight years ago, I was appointed to the then Drummondville circuit, having as my colleague the Rev. William J. Ford. During a period of forty six years in the active work of the ministry, I have had a varied experience, and in that time I have almost invariably received kind and considerate treatment from our people where it has been my privilege to labor. Conversing with my friends and family in regard to my different circuits and stations, I always refer to the thoughtful kindness of the members and friends of the church on the old Drummondville circuit to me and my family. To the end of life I shall look back with pleasure to the three years of my ministry on your circuit among the brightest and happiest years of my ministry.

"My ministerial term among you was not only pleasant but profitable to me spiritually, and I trust also to the churches comprised in the circuit. At nearly every appointment the head of the church favored myself and colleagues with revivals, the lukewarm were incited to increased activity in the service and work of Christ, backsliders were reclaimed and believers built up in the faith and hope of the Gospel. I am highly gratified to hear of the prosperity of your church. I need scarcely tell you the deep interest I feel in it. May your Shiloh be ever the seat of

The world did, and we same signs to nation. The to inspire us for the future. that the his- years may so Niagara Falls is our church of Canada and concerned—ast may be ury of the fu- permitted to f the brighter

tranquility and joy, and upon you may God command the blessing, even life forevermore. Owing to deaths and removals, some of our earliest and strongest circuits have, to a painful extent, been reduced, both in numbers and strength. I rejoice that such is not your experience. Notwithstanding that your church is part of the third circuit formed in Upper Canada in the year 1795, your bow abides in strength, and the cause of God among you is strong and growing. May God pour down His spirit abundantly upon the membership and adherents of your church, and upon the community."

REV. SAMUEL WILSON,

of London writes, "During my pastorate (1880-83) by vote of the quarterly board Stamford appointment was set off and Drummondville became a station. In my second year special services were held for twelve weeks, resulting in an addition of about seventy members to the church. I never found any people that worked more heartily to help forward revival work. I look back upon those three years with great pleasure as being one of the happiest terms of my ministerial career.

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and ever. Amen."

REV. G. A. MITCHELL, M. A.

of Georgetown, writes: "Fifteen years ago last June we were met at the station by Bro. Lewis and assured that we would be welcomed by the kind hearted people of Drummondville. This was fully realized during three happy years and ever since then the thought of the old home, the old church and the old friends we loved opens up afresh the springs of joy in our hearts. Our first meeting was the Thursday evening prayer meeting—the confusion of rattling windows and the weird moaning and roaring of the Falls caused a deep sense of strangeness and loneliness, but when the brethren and sisters prayed with such unction and fervor, as was their custom in those days, we realized this is indeed the house of God and these truly are his people. As I stood in the pulpit on the first Sabbath, I thought of the old church and its long interesting history, and then of the old red meeting house, and the pioneer fathers of the former days—when I thought of the long list of

names I had read as printed on the back wall of the parsonage, I felt as though this great company of able and honored preachers who had stood in that pulpit was present, and watching me do my duty, and I hoped and prayed that I might be a worthy successor of such worthy and noble men. During those three years we were favored with the frequent visits of honored missionaries, prominent evangelists and numbers of devout men and women gathered from every land—some of whom came to see the Falls and others to enjoy the camp meeting services. Many of the friends with whom we labored at that time and whom we learned to love are still on the way, but others have gone on before us, to join the triumphant church above and serve Him day and night in His temple.

'Yet love to linger, love to stay,  
Where first they learned to watch and pray,  
On wings of faith to rise  
A host of witnesses they stand,  
A diademed illustrious band,  
And urge us to proceed  
To take the crown and win the world for God.'

"Let us accept the challenge and help to win the world for God, till we also obtain the crown and join our friends who have already been gathered to our Father's house above."

The last message is from the

REV. RICHARD HOBBS,

of London, during whose ministry the present church was erected. He writes:

"There are many things in my heart that I would like to say to your people, but I am reminded that I could not address myself either by pen or voice to my old congregation of ten years ago. 'Our fathers, where are they, and the prophets, do they live forever?' There were many eventful days during my pastorate. Among the most important was the moving out of the old church into the new. But the people were willing in the day of God's power, hence is due largely to the Methodist people the renovation and regeneration materially, and I trust morally, of Lundy's Lane and its people since they arose to build. I pray that peace and prosperity may still attend this church and its pastor."

These messages bring the history of Lundy's Lane Methodism down to the time of the building of the present church and within the memory of the greater part of this congregation. We have seen that Major Neal formed the first Methodist class in this vicinity in

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1788. This church was built in 1888, when Methodism had existed here just ONE HUNDRED YEARS.

This may have escaped observation at the time, if so it is not too late to call attention to it now. The church might have been named the Centenary, which it really is. We have already passed the first decade of the second century of Lundy's Lane Methodism.

Many ministers of our church had their early home within the bounds of the old Niagara circuit. Rowley Heyland was the son of a poor widow, who lived a few miles from the Lane. Father Corson lived here in his youth. Col. Ryerson, the father of the Ryerson brothers, lived at Long Point, in the early days included in Niagara. Our old circuit book shows that David Culp was here licensed as an exhorter, July 7, 1810, and he was the first Methodist minister who preached in Toronto and there during his ministry the first Methodist church was built in 1818.

Of the local preachers of those days the best remembered are Peter Bowslaugh, a Pennsylvania Dutchman, with a body like a giant and with the tenderness of a child, and Smith Griffin, grandfather of Dr. W. S. Griffin, who as he said himself "had too much of his own business to attend to, to occupy himself with any of Satan's work." Among the names commonly met with as connected with Methodism in the Niagara peninsula during the closing years of the last century and the opening years of this, besides those already mentioned, are these: Ostrander, Lawrence, Morden, Dell, Buchner, Doan, Lemon, Beam, Gonder, Street, Merritt, Keefer. These names are found in the very earliest records of our church and grand children and great grand children of these persons are found in all parts of our Dominion and many of them yet prominently connected with Methodism.

In Lundy's Lane, Methodism has more than held its own. This cannot be said of some other places where it was first planted in this province. Many of the old historic names are known no more, either as circuits or preaching appointments. This is true of Augusta, where the first class was formed, of Long Point, the home of the Ryerson's, of Warner's, where service is no longer held, and in the neighborhood of which no Methodist population exists. But Lundy's Lane Methodism continues. Let us hold to the name

# LUNDY'S LANE METHODIST CHURCH.

Let us speak of it as such, and let this be the name used in all written and printed references to this church. Lundy's Lane Methodism has an honored history—let the name be connected with that history. We pay all due reverence to the memory of the heroes who in Lundy's Lane met death in the deadliest and most decisive battle of the war—but if the name reminds us of the hard won victory of one day of battle, it ought surely call to mind a full hundred years of gospel labor, of spiritual conflict, and of many and splendid victories won for Christ. Lundy's Lane Methodism has done more for Canada than the battle of 1814, therefore let us revive and hold to the old name, LUNDY'S LANE METHODIST CHURCH, the third in succession from the old red meeting house. Our church here has grown in numbers. The number reported in the oldest register available, for the year 1859 was 82. In 1888, when the new church was built, 200 were reported, and in 1898 it stands at 300. We still hold part of the original two acre plot at the head of the Lane, and including this our church property is now valued at \$18,000. So Methodism stands here after an existence of over one hundred years and in like proportion it has increased throughout Ontario and in almost every Province of Canada. We may

## LEARN FROM THE PAST.

Not that the men and the methods of one hundred years ago would be best for today. It would not profit the farmers of Canada to go back to the scythe and flail, the ox teams and corduroy roads of the days of their fathers. But farmers of today may learn from the industry, the economy and the practical wisdom of many of the early pioneers. If the men who served this church two generations ago were brought to life and the congregations raised up with them, we might find much fault with both preachers and people, and with their work and methods. The limited education, the narrow range of thought, the rigid restrictions, the loud and boisterous services, these it may be said belonged to the past. So let them be—the days of circuit riders, saddle bags and camp meetings, have passed out forever. Yet we may learn from the past, from the old spirit, the gifts and graces and experiences made prominent in early Methodism, the unworldliness, the ac-

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bursts of religious feeling, the readiness  
in testimony, the unction in prayer, the  
servent power in exhortation, the plead-  
ing earnestness in individual appeal, the  
insistence of conversion and sanctifica-  
tion, the rapturous experience,

"Jesus all the day long,  
Is my joy and my song,"

the eager desire—made more ardent by  
persistent effort,—

"O that all His salvation may see,"

the heroic stand against sin in  
life and heart. These were ele-  
ments of strength, weapons of warfare

"not carnal, but mighty through God to  
the pulling down of strongholds." And  
in these things we may as ministers  
and members sit at the feet and learn,  
from the fathers of our church and of  
our country. But we may and ought to  
go far in advance of the fathers. As  
the day brightens and the horizon  
widens, Methodism ought to brighten  
and widen in thought and work. The  
times, pregnant with opportunity, call  
for deepened sympathies, a wiser adapta-  
bility, a more self-renouncing zeal, for a  
wider reach of effort and an all embrac-  
ing charity. By way of reproach the  
followers of Wesley were "the people  
called Methodists," but they made the  
name honorable and great, and we who  
inherit this great and honorable name  
must hand it down untarnished "to the  
generation to come."

## Extracts from the First Niagara Circuit Book. 1795—1824.

### THE TITLE PAGE.

"Book of Accompts of the Contributions and Disbursements of the Methodist Episcopal church on Niagara circuit. Established 1795. Christian Warner, general steward, approved of and appointed at a quarterly meeting held at Lyon's Creek, February 27, 1796—Dars. Dunham."

Here is the copy of an incomplete resolution on the subject of Ministerial support. It refers to the period when preachers first crossed the border to establish Methodism in Canada. The salaries on either side of the line at that date were not exorbitant.

"Whereas the price of goods is so high in this country that we think it our duty to raise the salary of our preachers who labor in this country above the stated sum specified in the forms of discipline for the Methodist Episcopal church in the United States—which to be on an average, is \$24 per quarter"

### First Lists of Contributors to Circuit Income with the name of classes.

"Dec. 6, 1795, quarterly meeting. Contributed for the support of the gospel—Cash—£1 13 0.

Contributions at quarterly meeting held February 27, 1796:

By strangers, cash.....	£0 16s. 0d.
Silverthorns, cash.....	1 2 3
Warners, cash.....	1 14 6
Public, cash.....	2 8 0
Samuel Vanevery contributed.....	8 0
Gage's, public.....	10 0
Morden's, public.....	17 6

Total..... £7 16 6

The Rev. Darius Dunham, the first Circuit Minister, corrects an error and signs a receipt.

"The above accompts being posted wrong I just certify my demands on Niagara circuit for traveling expenses and services six months past—Cash.

New York currency.....£ 38 1 8

And have received in all of the said circuit by the hand of the steward. By cash N.

Y. C..... 85 11 11

Balance due me..... 2 9 7

DARIUS DUNHAM."

Quaint form of Circuit Receipt by Rev. James Coleman, the second minister appointed.

"October 10th, 1797. Received in full of all Debts, Dues and Demands for traveling expenses and services to this present date, above mentioned.

JAMES COLEMAN."

The circuit extends, and classes multiply, as we see by this list, dated seven years after the organization of the circuit, the amounts contributed omitted.

"May 1st, 1803. Collections from different classes:

Newark.  
Four Mile Creek.  
Flamborough.  
Beverly.  
Auncaster.  
Barton.  
Stoney Creek.  
Fifty Mile Creek.  
Thirty.  
Twenty.

First church trial on Niagara Circuit.

"Crowland, Aug. 10, 1805. Elizabeth Shaver appeared before ower quarterly Conference, for redress of a former tryal, before Bro. N. Bangs, in presence of ower society in Stamford. E. Shaver is cleared by a vote of a large majority."

The circuit book is used as one of the first Baptismal Registers in the country, and Baptism of Infants is insisted upon. The first baptism is:

"Samuel, son of James and Mary Pew, born April 6th 1806, Stamford.

"December 27, 1817. James Brown, of Thorold, applied for license as a local preacher. The Conference granted a verbal license until he could have his children baptized the first opportunity, and then Bro. Ryan to give him a written license."

Toronto's first Methodist Minister, David Culp, licensed as an exhorter, but refused license to preach.

"July 7, 1810. David Culp made applycation for licens to exhort at ower quarterly meeting, he being recommended by his class. Upon mature consideration licens where granted.—Christian Warner, Secretary."

"Sept. 14, 1811. Bro. David Culp made application to preach, being recommended by his class. Lost by a majority of votes."

Circuit appropriation. How the Rev. Isaac Puffer and his family were provided for:

"October 19, 1820, Geo. Lawrence, Benjamin Corwin and Hiram Sweazy were chosen for a committee to estimate Bro. Puffer's expenses for flour and meat, which is twenty-four bushels of wheat, and 400 of pork, which will cost £13 9s. 0d."

First Methodist missionary collection.

"July 13, 1822, paid missionary money on Niagara Circuit to the Rev. Isaac Puffer, for missionary purposes, through the hands of Benjamin Corwin, circuit steward, £36 1s. 7d."

The last item is a note on the inside of the back cover showing that the first preachers of this circuit were also the first distributors of literature in the country.

"Sold of Mr. Dunham's books: Wesley's Journals, 7s. 0d.; Dottridge's Sermons, 4s. 10d.; Christian Baptism, 1s. 6d.; Primitive Physic, 5s. 0d.; total, £0 18s. 4d."

The book closes with the end of the year 1823, which also ends the connection of Upper Canada Methodism with the Genesee Conference. In 1824 the Canada Conference was formed, and a few years later entirely separated from the Methodism of the United States.

## **Names of the Ministers who have served this Church from the Organization of the Niagara Circuit in 1795, with the Dates of Their Appointment.**

- 1795—Darius Dunham.
- 1796—James Coleman.
- 1797—Darius Dunham, Michael Coate.
- 1798—James Coleman.
- 1799—James Coleman.
- 1800—Joseph Sawyer, Seth Crowell.
- 1801—Joseph Sawyer, Nathan Bangs.
- 1802—John Robinson, Daniel Pickett.
- 1803—Sylvanus Keeler, Samuel Howe, Reuben Harris.
- 1804—Danl. Pickett, Luther Bishop, Nathan Bangs.
- 1805—Gershom Pearce, Andrew Prindel.
- 1806—Thomas Whitehead, Robert Perry.
- 1807—Thomas Whitehead, Ninian Holmes.
- 1808—Henry Ryan, Isaac B. Smith.
- 1809—Henry Ryan, Robert Perry.
- 1810—Andrew Prindel, Joseph Gatchell.
- 1811—Isaac B. Smith, Peter Covenhoven.
- 1812—Andrew Prindel, Ninian Holmes.
- 1813—Ninian Holmes.
- 1814—David Youmans, Silas Hopkins.
- 1815—William Brown.
- 1816—Elijah Warren.
- 1817—J. W. Byam, George Ferguson.
- 1818—Isaac B. Smith, George Ferguson.
- 1819—Isaac B. Smith, D. Shepherdson.
- 1820—Isaac Puffer.
- 1821—Isaac Puffer, John Tackaberry.
- 1822—Ezra Adams, John Ryerson.
- 1823—Ezra Adams, William Ryerson.
- 1824—Thomas Demorest, William Ryerson.
- 1825—Thomas Demorest, William Griffiths.
- 1826—John Ryerson, William Griffiths.
- 1827—David Youmans, Rowley Heyland.
- 1828—James Richardson, Joseph Gatchell.
- 1829—James Richardson, Edmund Stoney.
- 1830—Joseph Messmore, James Wilson.
- 1831—Edmund Stoney, James Wilson.
- 1832—Edmund Stoney, Ephraim Evans.
- 1833—David Wright, Edwy M. Ryerson.
- 1834—David Wright, Alexander Irvine.
- 1835—Alexander Irvine, Alexander McNabb.
- 1836—Richard Jones, Alexander McNabb.
- 1837—Thomas Bevitt, Samuel Rose.
- 1838—Matthew Whiting, Samuel Rose.
- 1839—Matthew Whiting, Joseph Messmore.
- 1840—Hamilton Biggar, E. Shepherd, Thomas Cosford.
- 1841—Hamilton Biggar, John Law, G. R. Sanderson.
- 1842—Lewis Warner, G. R. Sanderson, Wm. McEwen.
- 1843—Lewis Warner, James Musgrove.
- 1844—Jonathan Scott, Jos. Messmore, Jos. Shepley.
- 1845—Jonathan Scott, Jos. Messmore.
- 1846—Reuben E. Tupper, Ephraim B. Harper.
- 1847—Reuben E. Tupper, Ephraim B. Harper.
- 1848—Ephraim B. Harper, John Hunt.

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- 1849-50—Edwy M. Ryerson, John Hunt.  
1851-2—Thomas Cosford, George Young.  
1853—Thomas Cosford, Claudius Byrne.  
1854-5—Alexander T. Green.  
1856—William T. Griffin.  
1857-9—G. N. A. F. T. Dixon.  
1860-2—John Wakefield.  
1863—Alexander Sutherland.  
1864-6—William S. Blackstock.  
1867-69—John G. Lavid.  
1870—John Mills, William J. Ford.  
1871—John Mills, James Awde.  
1872—John Mills, Joseph Odery.  
1873—Thomas Stobbs, John V. Smith.  
1874—Thomas Stobbs.  
1875-6—John Ridley.  
1877-9—Matthew Swann.  
1880-2—Samuel Wilson.  
1883-5—George A. Mitchell, B. A.  
1886-8—Richard Hobbs.  
1889-91—Richard W. Woodsworth.  
1892-3—James Awde, B. A.  
1894-6—Amos E. Russ, M. A.  
1897-8—John C. Stevenson.

The above list has been compiled from Dr. Cornisti's 'Cyclopedia of Methodism'; Cornwall's 'Case and Contemporaries'; the Conference Minutes, and original manuscript documents.

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### List of Members in the Class which met at Warner's Chapel, from Class Book in Possession of F. A. Hutt, Esq.

"Warner's Chapel Class—Bro. McQuen leader.  
Meets at Warner's chapel on Lord's Day at  $\frac{1}{2}$  2 o'clock.

- 1840—1. John Vanevery.  
2. Margret Vanevery.  
3. Margret McKinley.  
4. James McCoen.  
5. Janet McCoen.  
6. Mary Vanevery.  
7. Elizabeth Smith.  
8. Ann McKinley.  
9. Lavina Clow.  
10. Elizabeth Warren.  
11. Mary Stewart.  
12. John McKinley.  
13. Joseph Vanevery.

## Quarterly Class Tickets of various dates in possession of the writer.

March, 1820.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.

Deut. vi. 6, 7.

**G**

Dec. 1819.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Joshua xxiv. 15.

**F**

WESLEYAN-METHODIST SOCIETY.

Established 1739.

Quarterly Ticket for September, 1837.

The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace on earth, purified seven times.

Psaln xii. 6.

**B**

WESLEYAN-METHODIST SOCIETY.

Established 1739.

Quarterly Ticket for September, 1868.

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.

1 John iii. 14.

**V**

THE METHODIST CHURCH.

Quarterly Ticket for November, 1898.

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works.—Titus 2:7.

The general conference of this year (1898) has made the giving out of quarterly class tickets optional.

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—Titus 2:7.

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